

ED 405 696

EC 305 406

AUTHOR Reynolds, Maynard  
 TITLE A Checklist for Description of Features of Programs That Aim To Effectively Accomodate Mainstreamed Special Education Students in Regular Education Settings.  
 INSTITUTION Temple Univ., Philadelphia. Center for Research in Human Development and Education.  
 SPONS AGENCY Special Education Programs (ED/OSERS), Washington, DC.  
 PUB DATE Mar 90  
 NOTE 32p.; In: Designing and Evaluating School Learning Environments for Effective Mainstreaming of Special Education Students: Synthesis, Validation, and Dissemination of Research Methods. Final Report; see EC 305 400.  
 PUB TYPE Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)  
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS Check Lists; Class Organization; Classroom Environment; \*Disabilities; Educational Environment; \*Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; Instructional Effectiveness; \*Mainstreaming; \*Program Descriptions; Program Evaluation; \*Rating Scales; School Organization  
 IDENTIFIERS Academic Accommodations (Disabilities)

## ABSTRACT

This checklist is intended to be used as a rating instrument to assist in the design and description of classroom learning environments that provide for student diversity, including the mainstreaming of students with disabilities. Specific purposes of the checklist are to provide a framework for describing the organizational characteristics of effective classes and schools, for implementing effective instruction principles, for planning staff development activities, and for identifying the support needed by teachers to accommodate students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Each of the 13 scales included in the checklist contains five descriptions of school situations sequentially ordered according to increasing desirability. The desirability scaling is based on research, public policies, and the "wisdom of practice." For each scale, suggestions are given on how to determine the ratings, along with a list of the key elements or concepts defining the scale. These key elements can be considered critical dimensions of the particular scale and can also be used as a checklist to indicate their presence or absence. Included scales cover: (1) space, facilities, and furnishings; (2) resources and supports; (3) social environment; (4) student self-direction; (5) classroom management and climate; (6) teaming arrangements; (7) instruction; (8) curriculum flexibility; (9) accommodation to individual differences in previous learning; (10) evaluation; (11) appreciating cultural and individual differences; (12) child study processes; and (13) parent-teacher collaboration. A sample profile chart provides a summary display of the evaluation of a given program. (DB)

ED 405 696

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

**A CHECKLIST FOR DESCRIPTION OF FEATURES OF PROGRAMS  
THAT AIM TO EFFECTIVELY ACCOMMODATE  
MAINSTREAMED SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS  
IN REGULAR EDUCATION SETTINGS**

Maynard Reynolds

University of Minnesota  
and  
Temple University Center for Research  
in Human Development and Education

The research reported herein was supported in part by the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education and in part by a grant from the Office of Special Education Programs of the U.S. Department of Education. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position of the OSEP and no official should be inferred.

EC305406

## **USES OF THE CHECKLIST**

This checklist is intended to be used as a rating instrument to assist in the design and description of classroom learning environments that provide for student diversity, including mainstreamed exceptional students.

The checklist has several specific purposes. They provide a framework for (a) describing the organizational characteristics of effective classes and schools based on consensus from the field; (b) description of implementation of effective instruction principles; (c) planning staff development activities; and (d) identifying the kinds of support and collaboration needed by teachers in order to accommodate exceptional students in their classes.

**It is important to note that this checklist IS NOT DESIGNED TO BE, NOR SHOULD IT EVER BE USED AS, AN INSTRUMENT TO EVALUATE TEACHER PERFORMANCE.**

Each scale included in the checklist contains five descriptions of school situations (numbered 1-5) which are sequentially ordered according to increasing desirability. The desirability scaling is based on research, public policies, and the "wisdom of practice." At the highest level, 5, the scales provide a description of learning environments that should serve all students very well, including those who are handicapped or gifted.

The checklist is intended to be used either by teachers as a guide for analysis of their own teaching situations and behavior, or by other school personnel, such as teacher colleagues, program developers, and instructional leaders for analysis of program implementation and staff development needs. When it is used by someone other than the classroom teacher, a number of procedures are used, including direct observation in the instructional situation, interviews with the teacher, interviews with randomly selected students and parents, examination of school records, and a survey of instructional resources.

On the page opposing each scale, suggestions are given on how to determine the ratings on that particular scale, along with a list of the key elements or concepts defining the scale. The key elements listed can be considered critical dimensions of the particular scale, and can be used as a checklist (indicators) to rate their presence or absence. In addition to the ratings of the level of implementation for each of the scales, the key elements list provides an extended description of particular learning environments. The presence or absence of key elements in each scale can be used in planning for improvements.

Planning for improvement in programming may be carried out by a teacher or through consultation with fellow teachers, other specialized colleagues, or outside consultants. To facilitate analysis of patterns of ratings, a profile chart is provided on the last page of this booklet. The chart may be used for individual classrooms or other instructional environments (such as laboratories, the gymnasium, music rooms, etc.), or a school as a whole. It provides a quick way to summarize implementation and identify areas that need improvement.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **SCALE A: SPACE, FACILITIES, AND FURNISHINGS**

Completion of this scale requires on-site observation in the classroom (or any other types of learning environments), preferably during instruction time. This scale involves the following key elements:

- a. Space adequacy--is there enough room for comfortable performance of all learning tasks?
- b. Sound control--can everyone hear all that is intended to be heard?
- c. Provision of ramps, elevators, or other adjustments for elevation changes--for example, at entry ways
- d. Storage space adequacy--for teachers and students
- e. Adequacy of furniture--is there variety and appropriateness in desks, tables, chairs, etc.?
- f. Possibilities of flexible arrangements of furniture
- g. Accessibility to toilets, drinking fountains, lunch rooms, etc., for persons with disabilities
- h. Appropriate lighting and light controls
- i. Blackboards, bulletin boards, and other permanent places for writing and displays
- j. Access to and resources for use of audio-visual, technical aids, and equipment (such as TV, computers, and tools when appropriate)

In addition to the general rating on the scale, the key elements list provides a description of the limitations and the possibilities for improvements in the space-facilities-furnishings domain.

**Circle letters of items in the list above that need improvement.**

*SCALE A: SPACE, FACILITIES, AND FURNISHINGS*

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The classroom (or any other types of learning environments) (a) is essentially untreated for sound; (b) presents difficult elevation and entry problems for students in wheelchairs; (c) has no partitioned areas for small-group work; (d) is situated such that movement to washrooms, lunch rooms, and other essential areas is difficult for orthopedically or visually impaired students; (e) space is very limited--thus inflexible; (f) lacks adequate storage space; (g) furniture is limited in kind and flexibility; (h) lighting is inadequate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. At least six of the limitations (a through h, above) are characteristic of the classroom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. General architectural arrangements (such as ramps in addition to stairs at entries) are adequate, but internal spaces are essentially untreated and inflexible. Furniture is moveable, but only moderately varied and flexible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Basic architectural accommodations are adequate. Classroom and other spaces are generally adequate in size and sound treatment is adequate; but storage, furniture, and flexibility of space are significant problems. Lighting and sound control are acceptable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The classroom is adequate in size; it is treated effectively for sound control (e.g., carpeting); access and entry present no problems for any student; storage is adequate, flexible partitioning is possible and furniture is moveable and includes various types.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE B: RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS**

Ratings on this scale are intended to reflect how well teachers are supported by appropriate school-wide and system-wide policies and procedures, adequate budgets for instructional materials, efficient transportation systems, limitations in class size, and other factors that go well beyond the control of individual teachers. The ratings should be based on interviews with the teacher, the school principal, and selected other staff members (such as school psychologists), examination of school records, and observation of ongoing school practices. Key elements of concern are:

- a. Class size: possibilities of small group and one-on-one instruction when needed
- b. Consensus among teachers and administrators on primary educational values and policies
- c. Availability of necessary instructional supplies and materials
- d. Availability (to teachers) of consultants to help solve difficult problems
- e. Adequacy of staff development programs for teachers and other staff
- f. Adequacy of contacts and collaboration with other community agencies (welfare office, child protection agencies, health clinics, etc.)
- g. Scope, clarity, and implementation of policies on school attendance, disciplinary problems, and special education
- h. Teacher involvement in school resource allocations
- i. Efficiency of the transportation system for students
- j. Availability (to teachers) of paraprofessional help in the classroom
- k. Degree of discretionary authority given to teachers
- l. Degree of school-wide curriculum planning and leadership
- m. Clear, school-wide acceptance of responsibility for exceptional students
- n. General quality of coordination among programs in the school
- o. Degree of central office support and assistance to teachers
- p. Materials available to permit alternative modes of representation in instruction.

**Circle letters of items in the list above that need improvement.**

*SCALE B: RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS*

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Teachers are "on their own" with essentially no consultation and assistance to meet needs of exceptional students or to solve other problems. Budgets for instructional materials are extremely limited. Principals and other administrators provide little coordination of services within the school or with community agencies. Transportation of students is a major problem, mainly because of time students spend traveling. Staff development programs are minimal. Class size tends to be large.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Regular teachers are expected to communicate with special education staff, school psychologists, and others in planning for exceptional pupils; but communication is in fact limited and uncoordinated. Supplies of instructional materials are limited. Teacher aides (paraprofessionals) are unavailable. Training for mainstreaming is only beginning or ineffective. Functions of specialists and of regular teachers are only beginning to be clarified. Classes are quite large.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Budgets for instructional materials are adequate. Supports to teachers by psychologists, special education staff, social workers, and others are quite limited and operate without clear policies and coordination by the principal. Regular teachers feel that their responsibilities for exceptional students is growing, but supports are limited and unpredictable. Concern for large class size is evident.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Positive steps and progress are evident in providing resources and supports to regular teachers who serve students with diverse needs. Teachers receive consultation and assistance quite regularly and promptly when it is requested. A small program for providing classroom aides is in operation. Use of volunteers adds help. Curriculum materials and equipment are adequate to permit individualization of instruction by fully up-to-date methods..
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. School-wide explicit and well-supported policies exist on attendance, discipline, crisis management, and LRE (least restrictive environment) principles. Teachers participate with others in decisions about resource development and utilization and lead the way in curriculum planning. Assistance by an aide is provided half-time to each regular teacher. Funding for instructional materials is highly adequate. Transportation is efficient.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE C: SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

Ratings for this scale should be based on observation of the class in operation and interviews with the teacher and selected students. Key elements here are:

- a. Effective use of cooperative learning principles as one feature of program design
- b. Teaching children to be effective in group processes
- c. Evaluating students for behavior in groups as well as in more individualized work
- d. Emphasis on sharing and mutual helpfulness among students as well as on competition
- e. Use of peer and cross-age tutoring
- f. Teaching students to be effective peer tutors
- g. Systematic teaching of social skills
- h. Exceptional students are integrated for social and instructional activities
- i. Flexible grouping of students
- j. Students share common interests and values
- k. Peer group influences are positive re learning and schools

**Circle letters of items in the list above that need improvement.**

## SCALE C: SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Students are expected to work essentially alone on learning tasks. Student-student relationships tend to be nonsharing and competitive. The teacher encourages and rewards individual performance but is unsystematic in use of group processes. Cliquishness of students hampers broader class cohesion and morale. Exceptional students often feel isolated and lack of respect.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Students work mainly in isolation, occasionally in small groups. The teacher praises and supports friendly interactions but no systematic provision is made for instruction concerning group processes. Evaluation tends to be individually oriented and to encourage competition. No peer tutoring is provided.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Students work in small groups frequently and must share materials; but all records are individual. Students are expected to learn to work with each other but goals for group work are nonspecific. Limited peer-tutoring is provided, with minimal preparation of students for these functions. Exceptional students often feel isolated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Students are clustered so that they can interact freely. Group projects are assigned with considerable frequency. Group projects are evaluated informally, but grade records emphasize individual achievements. Social skills are valued. Some peer-tutoring is conducted; students are well prepared and highly motivated for peer-tutoring activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The development of positive social skills and effective group work behavior are avowed objectives of the teacher. Students are expected to interact and to help one another. Well-developed peer-tutoring and cooperative learning programs are conducted. The teacher teaches the skills of group processes and rewards effective group work. Definite efforts are made to provide socially integrative experiences for exceptional students. Grouping is flexible and changed as appropriate.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE D: STUDENT SELF-DIRECTEDNESS**

Ratings on this scale should be based on observations in the class, student interviews, and discussions with the teacher and school principal. Key elements to be considered are as follows:

- a. Student participation in class and school management
- b. Student leadership in school policy formation
- c. Student knowledge of instructional materials, their use and storage
- d. The teacher models meta-cognitive approaches to studying and learning
- e. Students are taught and encouraged to be meta-cognitive or strategic about learning
- f. "Scaffolding" (the gradual transfer of responsibility to students for learning strategies) is planned and implemented effectively.
- g. Students make some choices about organizing their school activities
- h. Students are held accountable for efficient and dependable school performance

**Circle letters of items in the above list  
that most need attention and improvement.**

**SCALE D: STUDENT SELF-DIRECTEDNESS**

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The class is rule-governed, based on administrator and teacher authority. Students have little or no concept of their participation in class management and of strategic approaches to self-management for purposes of learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Students share occasionally in discussions of how the school environment should be managed. A degree of "consent of the governed" is achieved. Students provide some help in managing materials and routines of the class. They are not encouraged to be self-managing in learning activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Formal arrangements are made for the regular involvement of students in governance--as in student government, student management of classroom materials, weekly class meetings, and the like. They also are assisted in learning about and using efficient study procedures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Individuals and groups of students are given special training and responsibility for the management of the school environment and processes. Included, for example, are running audio-visual machines and orienting new students. In addition, training may be included in counseling skills (listening, reinforcing, etc.) and other aspects of interpersonal and group behavior. They are given some instruction in self-managed approaches to study and learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Students share significantly in the governance (policy making and administration) of their classes and school. They are expected to help to make the learning environment productive. The teacher is the primary leader in the class but gives particular attention to encouraging constructive initiatives by students. Teaching students to be independently strategic about their own procedures for study and learning is an important part of the curriculum. The teacher models "metacognitive" procedures and expects/encourages similar behavior by students.

**PROCEDURES**

**SCALE E: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE**

Ratings on this scale should be based on observations in the classroom.  
Key elements here are:

- a. Effective techniques are used to control classroom disruptiveness
- b. Teacher reinforcement of positive social interactions by students
- c. Responses to teacher's attempts to alert the entire class
- d. Teacher "with-it-ness" or awareness of what is going on
- e. Management of transitions from one activity to another
- f. Safety and orderliness of the school and class environment
- g. Efficiency of class routines--the students know the routines and observe them
- h. Record-keeping (by the teacher) is consistent and thorough
- i. Rate of disturbing behavior by students
- j. Sanctions for violating rules are clear
- k. Sanctions for rule violation are exercised consistently and fairly
- l. Self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning by students
- m. Teacher-student interactions are mostly instructional rather than management-oriented
- n. Relationships among students and between teacher and students are positive and caring; friction is low
- o. School attendance is high by students and teachers
- p. Impartiality (fairness) by teacher
- q. Classroom atmosphere is active (low apathy)
- r. Teacher enthusiasm
- s. Freedom from "cliques" of students
- t. Teacher maintains student awareness of learning goals and expectations, and holds students accountable

**Circle letters of items that may need most attention for improvement.**

*SCALE E: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE*

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Classroom management is problematic. Only a minority of students tend to be thoroughly attentive or on task most times. Levels of friction among students and between teacher and students are high. Attendance is a problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Group signals and alerts by the teacher are generally well attended. At least half the students are on task at most times. Transition periods tend to be disorderly. Behavior disturbances are handled unpredictably. Materials management and record keeping are not systematic. Morale of students tends to be marginal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil communications and general management are adequate, but mainly on the basis of the high authority level of the teacher. Some favoritism is shown by the teacher. Student attendance in school is of concern, but not an extreme problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Communication is good; organization is complex but orderly; student attention level is high; disturbance rate is low. Teacher is creative and adaptive, shares responsibilities for the environment with students, and rationalizes rules in group sessions. Student satisfaction with the class and motivation are high. The teacher knows thoroughly what's going on in the class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. All students attend when teacher tries to alert the whole class; questions serve as signals for all students; systems for transitions, record keeping, materials management, and like matters are well understood and observed efficiently. Students are clear about expectations and consequences of their behavior. Interactions among students and with the teacher are positive. Teacher self-confidence and enthusiasm are high; favoritism is low. The environment is safe, orderly, and attractive for all persons.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE F: TEAMING ARRANGEMENTS**

Ratings on this scale should be based on discussions with the teacher, the school principal, the school psychologist, and other relevant staff. Examination of school policies and procedures also will be helpful. Following are some key elements for attention:

- a. Policies and procedures for making referrals and requesting consultation by regular teachers
- b. Participation of teachers in studies of exceptional students
- c. Parent participation in child study processes
- d. Class and school-wide work to avoid disorderly behavior
- e. Maintaining "ownership" (responsibility for solving) of problems in regular classes
- f. Frequency and quality of school-parent cooperation on positive developments of school climate and operations
- g. Communications and mutual helpfulness among teachers
- h. Use of consultation to help solve classroom problems
- i. Use of broad modes of environmental and student analysis to treat instructional and behavioral problems
- j. Systematic review and screening procedures to identify students who have special needs
- k. Communication and coordination between regular and special education teachers--especially when they serve some of the same students
- l. Leadership by the school principal in establishing effective communications and coordination of programs within the building

**Circle letters of items above that most need attention and improvement.**

## SCALE F: TEAMING ARRANGEMENTS

Check the one level of implementation most descriptive of the learning environment being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. When "problem" students are identified by regular classroom teachers, they are referred for study by specialists (e.g., school psychologists and special education staff) and will then be removed from regular classes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When "problem" students are identified in regular classrooms a referral is made to specialists. Specialists take the lead in writing an "Individualized Educational Program" (IEP) when eligibility for special education has been established. The diagnosis is almost exclusively child centered. Regular teachers and parents tend to be minor participants in preparing IEPs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When "problem" students are identified in the regular classrooms the teacher calls for consultation. This may involve other teachers, school psychologists, and others. Attention is given to alterations that might be made in the instructional environment as well as to characteristics of the student. Referral to special education may occur, but only after one or more "interventions" are tried and evaluated in the mainstream.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When "problem" students are identified in regular classrooms support services are made available. The regular teacher participates in the study of the situation and in making plans for alterations to better serve the student. Classroom observations are made of the student and the regular classroom learning environment. Consultation with the classroom teacher to achieve program modifications is a part of the total process. Special education and regular class teachers communicate frequently about plans for exceptional pupils. Most special education is carried out in the regular classes through collaborative arrangements by special and regular teachers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Systematic analyses for preventative interventions are made to resolve "problems" of students before they become serious handicaps. These become the bases for broad efforts for improvement as well (e.g., providing additional approaches in reading instruction, increasing teacher competency in using small-group cooperative instructional groups, or increasing home-school interaction on truancy issues). Specialists are called upon for consultation with initial attention given to possible program modifications to accommodate students' needs in the regular classrooms.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE G: INSTRUCTION**

Ratings on this scale should be based on observations in the instructional environment. Key elements of concern are:

- a. Intensity of instruction available to individuals
- b. Clarity of instructional goals and objectives
- c. High rates of time and success on tasks
- d. Use of advance organizers (early outlines by teachers of content, structure, and expectations of lessons)
- e. Direct instruction by the teacher--especially in introducing new ideas and skills
- f. Monitoring of student performance on learning tasks
- g. Frequency of feedback to students on performance on learning tasks
- h. Accountability of students for high-quality performance
- i. Provision of corrective feedback to students
- j. Appropriate provision of redundancy in selected learning areas
- k. Clear use of instruction to confront misconceptions by students
- l. High expectations for learning
- m. Use of questioning and other procedures to establish certainty about student understanding
- n. Skills taught with careful attention to applications beyond school life
- o. Systematic review and practice
- p. Systematic use of homework
- q. Care in checking on homework
- r. Use of assessment procedures as an integral part of instruction
- s. Flexibility and variety in instructional strategies
- t. Use of good examples, analogies, metaphors, etc.
- u. Use of positive strategies to facilitate generalization of concepts
- v. Reinforcement principles are used systematically

**Circle letters of items from the list above  
that may warrant special attention  
in efforts for improvement of instruction.**

## SCALE G: INSTRUCTION

Check the one level of implementation most descriptive of the learning environment being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Instructional goals and procedures are unclear and lacking in rationalization. Mostly the teacher lectures, uses routines designed to minimize "problems," and uses simple worksheets or drills to fill out class time. Reading and other assignments are made without carefully developed "advance organizers," such as outlines of lesson structures and introduction of new concepts by the teacher.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Instructional goals are stated in course planning documents, but are not fully clear to students and parents. Instruction is mostly unsystematic in matters of advance organizers, redundancy, and review.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Instructional goals are made clear by the teacher. Procedures are highly routinized. Academic learning time is a problem. Procedures do not reflect careful consideration of needs for redundancy, structure, and advance organizers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Instructional goals and expectations are very clear for everyone. Academic learning time (ALT) is high. Advance organizers are used occasionally. Instruction tends to be direct (highly structured, highly intense, and teacher directed, etc.) most of the time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Teacher uses advance organizers, systematic reviews, corrective feedback, frequent questions and other "effective" instructional procedures. ALT in the class is high. Direct instruction procedures (high density, teacher-structured) are used frequently, especially in introducing new topics. Helping students to restructure their knowledge is a primary concern. Instructional goals are explicit and clear. Redundancy is provided in instructional experience to enhance automaticity on appropriate skills and subject matter knowledge.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE H: CURRICULUM FLEXIBILITY**

Ratings on this scale should be based on interviews with the teacher, the school principal, and curriculum specialists (if any), on review of materials and examinations used in the classroom and on direct observation of instruction. Particular attention should be given to the following key elements of this scale:

- a. School-wide clarity and agreement on major curriculum objectives and sequences
- b. Variety of textbooks and other instructional materials to be used in work toward instructional goals and objectives
- c. Degree of accommodation in programs to individual differences in previous learning, academic and other relevant skills and interests
- d. The curriculum has been designed by teachers, not left just to textbooks for structure, content, and goals
- e. Degree of discretionary authority given to teachers in individualizing programs
- f. Variety of instructional resources (books, audiovisual aids, computers, equipment, etc.) available to teachers and being used effectively

**Circle letters of items above  
that might deserve early and special attention  
in efforts to improve instruction.**

## SCALE H: CURRICULUM FLEXIBILITY

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Curriculum content is defined primarily by the textbook or teacher's guide, including the sequence of topics or activities. The content and sequence are uniform for all students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The teacher basically follows a textbook or teacher's guide in setting content and sequence of topics but introduces significant modifications or "special" topics to accommodate to group's general interests and the teacher's judgement of priorities. The curriculum is almost totally uniform for all students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The teacher basically follows a textbook or curriculum guide but uses more than one level or set of textbooks and other materials to meet individual needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Content for particular students is specified by the teacher; several levels of textbooks are used along with varieties of other instructional materials. Students are assessed individually and given tasks and materials of appropriate levels. Curriculum units are carefully sequenced in basic content areas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Individual student interests and achievement levels are considered in selecting content. Instructional materials include several levels of reading materials, collections of audiovisual aids, instructional games and competency examinations, etc. Curriculum units are well integrated across content areas and in sequence.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE I: ACCOMMODATION TO**  
**INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN PREVIOUS LEARNING**

Probably no other aspect of the individualization of instruction and of accommodation of exceptional students is more important than understanding what individual students know and can do in the domains of instruction and then accommodating instruction to such differences. Ratings on this scale should depend on interviews with the teacher. Following are some key elements to be considered in completing this scale:

- a. Careful and detailed assessment of each student's knowledge in the domain of instruction
- b. Flexible variation in curriculum pacing for individuals
- c. Intensification of instruction for students who show initial slow progress
- d. Flexibility of grouping for instruction
- e. Probes for student understanding and misunderstandings
- f. Resources available for support of students showing learning problems
- g. Planned activities for students who show rapid progress
- h. Recognition of outstanding progress and achievement
- i. Student self-monitoring procedures for study and of comprehension
- j. Student motivation for continual learning
- k. Student perseverance on learning tasks

**Circle letters of items above to show areas needing improvement.**

**SCALE 1: ACCOMMODATION TO  
INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN PREVIOUS LEARNING**

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. All students are given fixed, uniform assignments to complete in uniform periods of time with little or no regard to differences among students in previous learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. All students are given uniform minimum assignments for standard periods of time. Students who complete work rapidly usually are free to work on unrelated activities. Students who do not complete work "on time" continue with classmates in the next assignments despite poor background. Some extra help may be given to the slowest learners.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. All students are given uniform minimum assignments for standard periods of time. Students who complete tasks rapidly and well are allowed informally to proceed to more advanced related topics. Students who fail to complete tasks satisfactorily are given extra tasks and/or assigned to resource teachers or others for individual help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Students are given mastery examinations at set times, such as the beginning of each semester. After each evaluation, subgroups based on ability to proceed at different rates and at different levels of the curriculum.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Instruction is planned, taking into account results of mastery examinations and specific probes by the teacher to assess specific achievement background and possible misconceptions of students. Entry to new areas may proceed at any time according to the individual student's demonstrated readiness.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE J: EVALUATION**

Ratings on this scale should be based on interviews with the teacher and examination of tests and other evaluative devices used in the instructional situation. It will be important as well to interview representative students to check on their participation in evaluation processes and on their understanding and use of the results of assessment data. Following are some of the key elements worthy of special attention in making the rating on this scale.

- a. Use of criterion-oriented as well as norm-referenced assessment
- b. Use of assessment data as integral parts of instruction
- c. Care in relating tests to the local curriculum
- d. Use of multiple evaluation modes, going beyond traditional testing
- e. Prompt and thorough reporting of assessment data to students
- f. Assisting students in interpretation of assessment data
- g. Student use of assessment techniques to monitor their own performance
- h. Periodic reporting of assessment data to parents
- i. Use of mastery-oriented testing procedures (students are assigned to re-teaching or advanced subjects on the basis of mastery exams)
- j. Use of evaluation procedures to assess the effectiveness of instruction and programs within the class

**Circle letters of items above on  
which improvements may be most important.**

## SCALE J: EVALUATION

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Evaluation is almost totally test oriented and involves comparisons with other class members. Results are recorded as percentiles, percentages, or comparative grades, usually with no breakdown for diagnostic purposes. Scores are not interpreted in "mastery" terms. Atmosphere stresses grades and competition. Linkage of testing to the curriculum is limited.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Evaluation is test and norm oriented, but with careful attention to domains (or what is being taught). Some modest degree of use is made of results in assigning "make-up" work or in other limited adjustments of the program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Evaluation is targeted precisely on what is being taught. All exams are returned to pupils but attention is mainly on grading, rather than on the planning of instruction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Most assessments are mastery oriented and specific to domains, and they are used effectively and regularly in planning instruction. Feedback to students on all tests is complete and clear. However, term grades tend to be assigned quite strictly on a norm or social comparison basis. Students are encouraged to monitor and evaluate their own work independently.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Assessments are partly test oriented but they include informal observations and assessments as well. All evaluation is specific to domains and mastery oriented. Assessments are frequent and integral parts of instruction. Occasionally, norm-oriented tests are used (with older students) to give them a basis for comparing their rates of development with those of others. All students have a solid chance to sense their own progress. Students evaluate their own learning as part of the total evaluation program.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **SCALE K: APPRECIATING CULTURAL AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES**

Ratings on this scale should be based on observations of the decor of classrooms (checking on pluralism in orientation to art, special events, holidays, festivals, etc.), and interviews with the teacher, representative students, and the school principal. These are some of the special key elements to be considered:

- a. Staff understanding of the cultural background of students in the class (or school)**
- b. Provision of services for students whose primary language is not English**
- c. Valued consideration of artifacts, art, history, aesthetic experiences from all cultures, especially those represented by student body**
- d. Welcoming of parents of minority students into school affairs**
- e. Presence of culturally diverse material**
- f. School-wide and district-wide leadership in staff development activities to foster understanding and appreciation of cultural differences**

**Circle letters of items needing attention.**

*SCALE K: APPRECIATING CULTURAL AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES*

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Instruction proceeds with little or no explicit recognition of cultural differences. Majority values and styles dominate the classroom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Special arrangements for extra help are made for students who have second language problems or who have unusual developmental patterns and learning styles. Teachers have had human relations training.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Special projects oriented to needs of minority students are arranged to supplement the regular school program: such as special pre-school language classes, bilingual youth advocates, or special units in Native-American education or Black studies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Efforts are made to go beyond special projects and to redesign the basic curriculum to include valid elements from all relevant cultures so that all children can feel that their cultures are given studied and valued consideration.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Content, materials, and methods of instruction are made meaningful for poor and minority group children as well as all others; the commitment to cultural pluralism is real, especially as it is reflected in curriculum. Both students and parents from minority communities feel engaged and well understood in the school situation; they feel like equals among equals. Aesthetic school experiences include samples from all cultures.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE L: CHILD STUDY PROCESSES**

Ratings on this scale should be based on interviews with psychologists or others who are involved in making special studies of students, interviews with the teacher, and examination of school records, especially those that will reveal how individual children are studied and understood. These are key elements to be noted:

- a. Adequacy of school-wide record systems for students
- b. Degree of systematic use of cumulative school records on students
- c. Clarity of policies and procedures for studying particular children when requested by teachers or parents
- d. Extent to which the study of a child is extended to a study of his school, home, and total life situation
- e. Extent to which special studies are oriented to improvements in programs offered to children and not simply to issues of classification and placement of the students
- f. Involvement of psychologists and other specialists in efforts for program development
- g. Degree of effective interaction between educators and representatives of community agencies outside of the school (mental health clinics, welfare offices, etc.) in serving the needs of particular students and in community development
- h. Adherence to the spirit (as well as the legal requirements) of the least restrictive environment principle in student placements

Circle letters of items most needing attention.

*SCALE L: CHILD STUDY PROCESSES*

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. There is no structured child study process. Children who do not conform to expected behavior or achievement norms are dealt with through referral and placement in isolated special programs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Child study is seen as a problem-centered effort to identify and categorize children's deficits using standardized psycho-medical tests and to determine appropriate placements external to the regular classroom. Specialists, such as psychologists, are mainly occupied in classifying and labeling students for special programs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Child study is based heavily upon standardized assessment instruments to diagnose and classify the child's deficits in accord with state and federal guidelines for special education and other categorical programs. Plans for help often involve regular teachers with some supportive help by special educators.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Child study is educationally-oriented, with child, his/her teacher, and parents central to process and focus on analyzing teaching-learning processes to determine areas where efforts for improvement should be concentrated. Systematic screening procedures are used to identify children with special problems (for example, limited vision or poor reading ability).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Child study is focused on positive development of increasingly accommodative learning environments. Children's diversity in needs and abilities are closely examined, not to identify deficits in children but rather to plan modification in school practices and in school/home environments. Specialists, such as psychologists, are heavily involved in program development as well as in child study. Systematic screening procedures are used to identify students who may need intensive studies of vision, hearing, behavioral, and learning problems. The school cooperates with other agencies to serve children and their families.

**PROCEDURES**  
**SCALE M: PARENT-TEACHER COLLABORATION**

Ratings on this scale should be based on interviews with the teacher, parents, and the school principal. It will be helpful to examine report cards and other reporting procedures used by the school. Contacts with representatives of advocacy groups concerned with disabled persons should be made, if possible. These are some of the key elements to be observed.

- a. Frequency and quality of teacher-parent contacts
- b. Involvement of parents in school policy development
- c. Parent participation in IEP<sup>1</sup> conferences and other meetings concerned with exceptional students
- d. Parental involvement in positively oriented programs relating to school attendance and tardiness, discipline, expectations for academic attainments and monitoring homework assignments
- e. Trust in relations between teachers and parents
- f. Parent training for functions in planning and monitoring programs for exceptional students
- g. Parental expression of affection to children and interest in their school work
- h. Parental expectations for academic success
- i. Helping parents to become involved in assisting and monitoring students in their school work
- j. Informing parents about school behavior and progress of their children

Circle letters of items above that  
deserve high priority in efforts for improvement.

---

<sup>1</sup>Individual Educational Plans, as required by law in the cases of handicapped students.

## SCALE M: PARENT-TEACHER COLLABORATION

Check the one level of implementation most descriptive of the learning environment being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Parent-teacher communication is mainly through formal "report cards;" otherwise, limited to crisis-stimulated meetings, often adversarial in nature, or to conferences required under governmental law, rules, and regulations. Administrators enter mainly as rule enforcers and record keepers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Parent-teacher interactions, in addition to crisis-stimulated meetings, occur on a regularly scheduled basis throughout the year; the agenda is characteristically limited to the teacher's reporting on child's progress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Parent-teacher interactions, in addition to crisis meetings and formal reports, include periodic meetings with all parents to communicate informally children's positive behaviors and achievements. Parents support school-wide emphasis on school attendance, achievement, and orderly behavior. Parents of exceptional students attend IEP meetings but their functions are limited.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Parent-teacher interactions are characterized by an open and trusting climate of communication within which problems and crises are seen as the cause for common concern and investment in solutions; parents and teacher participate in both formal and informal information sharing. Parents know about homework and help their children in meeting school expectations; this includes monitoring of ways students use time (e.g., limited TV viewing). Parents of exceptional pupils participate actively in IEP preparation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Parent-teacher cooperation is close and continuous. As collaborators in program planning and evaluation, as volunteer aides, as participants in various school committees, as co-sponsors of school-community activities, parents join with teachers in enhancing and expanding children's learning and experiential opportunities. The atmosphere stresses creativity, mutual commitments, and trust. Administrators enter as leaders/ facilitators. When severe problems occur, parents, teachers, and other school officials are able to work together cooperatively in service to the child and not as adversaries. Parents of exceptional students have received special orientation and training and participate fully and confidently in IEP preparation.

## PROCEDURES

### SCALE M: PARENT-TEACHER COLLABORATION

Ratings on this scale should be based on interviews with the teacher, parents, and the school principal. It will be helpful to examine report cards and other reporting procedures used by the school. Contacts with representatives of advocacy groups concerned with disabled persons should be made, if possible. These are some of the key elements to be observed.

- a. Frequency and quality of teacher-parent contacts
- b. Involvement of parents in school policy development
- c. Parent participation in IEP<sup>1</sup> conferences and other meetings concerned with exceptional students
- d. Parental involvement in positively oriented programs relating to school attendance and tardiness, discipline, expectations for academic attainments and monitoring homework assignments
- e. Trust in relations between teachers and parents
- f. Parent training for functions in planning and monitoring programs for exceptional students
- g. Parental expression of affection to children and interest in their school work
- h. Parental expectations for academic success
- i. Helping parents to become involved in assisting and monitoring students in their school work
- j. Informing parents about school behavior and progress of their children

Circle letters of items above that  
deserve high priority in efforts for improvement.

---

<sup>1</sup>Individual Educational Plans, as required by law in the cases of handicapped students.

## SCALE M: PARENT-TEACHER COLLABORATION

Check the  
one level of  
implementation  
most descriptive  
of the learning  
environment  
being observed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Parent-teacher communication is mainly through formal "report cards;" otherwise, limited to crisis-stimulated meetings, often adversarial in nature, or to conferences required under governmental law, rules, and regulations. Administrators enter mainly as rule enforcers and record keepers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Parent-teacher interactions, in addition to crisis-stimulated meetings, occur on a regularly scheduled basis throughout the year; the agenda is characteristically limited to the teacher's reporting on child's progress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Parent-teacher interactions, in addition to crisis meetings and formal reports, include periodic meetings with all parents to communicate informally children's positive behaviors and achievements. Parents support school-wide emphasis on school attendance, achievement, and orderly behavior. Parents of exceptional students attend IEP meetings but their functions are limited.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Parent-teacher interactions are characterized by an open and trusting climate of communication within which problems and crises are seen as the cause for common concern and investment in solutions; parents and teacher participate in both formal and informal information sharing. Parents know about homework and help their children in meeting school expectations; this includes monitoring of ways students use time (e.g., limited TV viewing). Parents of exceptional pupils participate actively in IEP preparation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Parent-teacher cooperation is close and continuous. As collaborators in program planning and evaluation, as volunteer aides, as participants in various school committees, as co-sponsors of school-community activities, parents join with teachers in enhancing and expanding children's learning and experiential opportunities. The atmosphere stresses creativity, mutual commitments, and trust. Administrators enter as leaders/ facilitators. When severe problems occur, parents, teachers, and other school officials are able to work together cooperatively in service to the child and not as adversaries. Parents of exceptional students have received special orientation and training and participate fully and confidently in IEP preparation.

## Profile Chart

This chart provides a sample profile of program implementation. The X's in the chart indicate the specific level of implementation obtained for each scale. For example, the profile shown below indicates that the implementation of scale A (Space, Facilities, and Furnishings) is at level 4, the implementation of scale B (Resources and Support) is at level 3, and so on.

<i>SCALES</i>	<i>LEVEL</i>				
	1	2	3	4	5
A. Space, Facilities, and Furnishings				X	
B. Resources and Supports			X		
C. Social Environment		X			
D. Student Self-Directedness		X			
E. Classroom Management and Climate			X		
F. Testing Arrangements		X			
G. Instruction			X		
H. Curriculum Flexibility		X			
I. Accommodation to Individual Differences in Previous Learning		X			
J. Evaluation			X		
K. Appreciating Cultural Differences				X	
L. Child Study Processes			X		
M. Parent-Teacher Collaboration				X	



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)  
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



## NOTICE

### REPRODUCTION BASIS

This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").